



# Divine Justice

## Gods, Generals, and the Crisis of the Greco-Persian War

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Crisis Director: Paige Kempf

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### **I . Letter from the Crisis Director**

Hello and welcome to the Divine Justice: Gods, Generals, and the Crisis of the Greco-Persian War committee! My name is Paige Kempf and I will be your Crisis Director during OSUMUN 2024. I am a second-year Political Science major from Wooster, Ohio! I also have minors in history and classics. I got my introduction to ancient mythology through Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson books. A series that was popular when I was young and is getting a new rebirth from the live-action show. Now, I study ancient civilizations and folklore from various ages. I got my start in Model UN in the spring of my first year, making me newer to the MUN experience.

Nonetheless, I am set on making this committee one to remember. I want the delegates to explore the characters and have fun with the committee.

This committee is not strictly historical, being primarily focused as a mythological committee.

This means that nothing is off the table; delegates are welcome to break away from the historical and embrace the mythological side. You, as delegates, will be two dueling pantheons of gods after the intense Greco-Persian War. The gods are being tasked with the spiritual judgment of two war generals. Both pantheons are aiming for the worst punishment for the opposing general. Darius I and Themistocles have both done inexcusable actions in the name of their gods. Now, are you going to save your general or watch them drown in their wrong-doings?

Let the battle begin,

Paige Kempf

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## **II. Introduction**

Enter the world of the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Persians. Set in 449 B.C. the Greco-Persian War has finally ended; now the delegates must put the responsible generals on trial. The delegates will be representing gods from both the Greek and the Persian pantheons. With tensions high, the gods have to consider the crimes committed by each general. The end goal of the committee is to agree on the consequences of the generals without starting another Greco-Persian conflict. This is a battle amongst the gods, will the trial go without a hitch? Or will the gods start another intense war?

## **III. Background Information**

The Greco-Persian War, also known as the Persian Wars, took place between 492 and 449 BCE. It was a series of conflicts between the Persian Empire, led by King Darius I, and the Greek city-states. The main catalyst for the war was the Ionian Revolt (499–493 BCE), in which Ionian Greek cities rebelled against Persian rule.

Darius I sought to punish the Greeks for their involvement in the revolt, leading to the first Persian invasion of Greece in 492 BCE. The Battle of Marathon in 490 BCE marked a significant event during the war, where the Greeks, particularly the Athenians, successfully repelled the Persian forces. The war continued with the second Persian invasion in 480 BCE, orchestrated by Darius' successor, Xerxes I. This invasion included famous battles such as the Battle of Thermopylae, where a small Greek force, led by King Leonidas I of Sparta, resisted the Persian advance. The Greeks eventually faced defeat at the Battle of Artemisium, but a crucial turning point occurred at the Battle of Salamis, where the Greek navy, mainly the Athenian fleet, defeated the Persian navy.

The final phase of the war saw the Greeks achieving a decisive victory at the Battle of Plataea in 479 BCE and concurrently at the Battle of Mycale. These victories led to the withdrawal of Persian forces from Greece and the end of the Greco-Persian War. The conflict had lasting implications for both Greek and Persian societies and is considered a pivotal moment in ancient history.

### **The Generals**

#### **Darius I (Persian):**

Darius I, also known as Darius the Great, was the Persian king during the early stages of the Greco-Persian War. His reign began in 522 BCE, and he played a significant role in initiating the conflict with the Greek city-states. The conflict between the Persian Empire and the Greek city-states began with the Ionian Revolt. Greek cities in Asia Minor, under Persian rule, rebelled against Persian authority. Darius I sought to quell the rebellion and punish Athens and Eretria for supporting the Ionian cities.

Darius I, angered by the support given by Athens and Eretria to the Ionian Revolt, decided to launch a punitive expedition against Greece. The first Persian invasion included attempts to conquer mainland Greece. The Persian forces faced setbacks, including the stormy weather that damaged their fleet. Darius I's forces, led by his generals, faced the Greeks at the Battle of Marathon. Despite having a larger army, the Persians were defeated by the Athenians and their allies. Darius I was unable to fulfill his revenge against Athens.

Darius I died in 486 BCE, and his son, Xerxes I, succeeded him as the Persian king. Xerxes continued his father's ambition to conquer Greece and launched the second and more massive Persian invasion in 480 BCE.

While Darius I initiated the conflict and sought to punish Greek city-states for their role in the Ionian Revolt, he did not witness the full unfolding of the Greco-Persian War. It was under Xerxes I's rule that the conflict had its major battles such as Thermopylae, Salamis, and Plataea. Darius I, however, set the stage for the larger geopolitical struggle between the Persian Empire and the Greek city-states during this period.

### **Themistocles (Greek):**

Themistocles played a crucial role in the Greco-Persian War, particularly during the Second Persian invasion (480-479 BCE). Themistocles was a strong advocate for naval power and foresaw the importance of a formidable navy in facing the Persian threat. He convinced the Athenians to allocate resources, especially silver from the mines of Laurium, to build a powerful fleet. Themistocles led the Greek fleet at the Battle of Artemisium, a naval engagement that took place simultaneously with the land Battle of Thermopylae. Although Artemisium was a tactical draw, it allowed the Greeks to delay the Persian advance and prepare for the decisive Battle of Salamis.

Themistocles' most significant contribution came at the Battle of Salamis. Recognizing the Persian navy's numerical superiority, he devised a plan to lure the Persians into the narrow straits of Salamis, where their larger fleet would be less effective. The Greeks, with Themistocles at the helm, achieved a decisive victory, crippling the Persian navy and thwarting Xerxes I's invasion. Themistocles demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic acumen during the war. His ability to read the situation, exploit the geography, and make critical decisions, especially at Salamis, played a pivotal role in the Greek victory. The success at Salamis shifted the tide of the war in favor of the Greeks. Themistocles continued to be a key figure in the subsequent events, including the Greek alliance-building efforts and the Battle of Plataea (479 BCE), which ultimately led to the defeat of the Persians on land.

While Themistocles' contributions were instrumental in the Greek victory, his later political career in Athens faced challenges, and he was eventually ostracized. Despite his fall from political favor, Themistocles' legacy remains tied to his strategic vision and leadership during a critical period in Greek history.

#### **IV. Crisis Scenario Overview**

The war is over, the bodies are retrieved from the battlefield. Although the Greeks were deemed the winner of the war, both sides experienced great losses. The warmongers have long died, and the civilizations pray to their gods to make those responsible for their losses meet an appropriate fate. Now, the mortals lay in wait for the gods. The souls of Darius I and Themistocles have been summoned to appear before the gods to determine their fate.

This crisis committee is the meeting between the Greek and Persian pantheons, known for their infighting and rash decisions. The crisis director stands are the impartial Greek Titan, Themis, known for her divine law and order. Assisted with her backroom of Armaiti, the Persian goddess of order, and the Greek fates. They will be responding to the actions of the pantheons, determining how the souls will proceed.

The pantheons will be discussing the fate of Darius I and Themistocles' souls. However, with tensions high and everyone has their motives. Greek gods are set on the highest punishment for Darius I, while the Persian gods want the same for Themistocles. However, the infighting between the gods leaves the individual pantheons having their arguments.

The main issue, is what are we to do with the warlords' souls? If not handled currently, sacrifices will be lost as the mortals struggle. Less sacrifices means less power in this committee. The trials must go on on time to ensure the survival of the civilizations.

Next, how are the gods going to aid their people? With both pantheons working together, the opinions are endless. However, are the gods ready to come united so soon after this bloodbath battle?

## **V. Positions List**

### **Greek Pantheon**

#### **Zeus**

After saving his siblings from their father, Kronus, Zeus and his brothers decide their roles in their soon-to-be Pantheon. Now Zeus is the chief deity of the Greek pantheon, Zeus' primary original aspect was as a weather god with thunderbolts forged by Hephaestus were his chosen weapon. Being the King of the Gods, most of the pantheon resides with him; subject to his will. Despite his marriage to his sister Hera, Zeus is known for his large number of love affairs with both mortals and goddesses.

Associations: God of the sky, thunder, weather, and kingship.

#### **Poseidon**

Nicknamed the *Earth-shaker* of Ancient Greece, Poseidon stands among his brothers in the main three gods. Overseeing the ocean, Poseidon counters his brothers Zeus (ruler of the sky) and Hades (ruler of the underworld). His symbol and weapon of choice is the trident, once possibly a fishing spear. Ancient Greeks worshiped him both inland and on the coast for his connections to earthquakes and horses. With coastal city-states, such as Thebes, deeming Poseidon as their

Associations: God of the sea, storms, earthquakes, and horses.

#### **Hades**

The oldest son of the original six Olympians, Hades was the first to be eaten by Cronus. Possibly one of the only loyal husbands within the major gods; Hades is married to Persephone, the spring goddess. Ruler of the underworld, Hades is seen as one of the most feared gods within Olympus. Being the king of the underworld gave Hades rule over Earth's precious metals, giving

him the association of wealth. He is stern and pitiless, unmoved by sacrifice and prayer. Only influenced by the opinion of his wife, Hades is seen as aloof and shadowy.

Associations: God of the Underworld and Wealth

## **Hera**

The sister-wife of Zeus, Hera is known for her stubborn and quarrelsome behavior. Standing as the queen of the gods; Hera oversees marriage, childbirth, women, and the sky and stars. One of the most powerful goddesses within the Greek Pantheon, her wrath is known to be limitless. Every god and mortal knows not to cross the maiden considering that being on her bad side could be your demise. Hera can be a friend or foe, no matter who you are.

Associations: Goddess of Marriage & Birth

## **Athena**

Zeus' firstborn and favorite, Athena, sprang from his head. Taking after her mother Metis, Athena is the goddess of wisdom. Depicted as an analytical figure, there are times that Athena lets her godly anger take over her decisions. Being the patron goddess of several Greek heroes, her influence is seen through hundreds of trials and tribulations. Hercules, Odysseus, Perseus, etc, have all had divine intervention from the goddess. Her praise is often needed for the success of quests.

Associations: Goddess of wisdom, courage, strategy, and warfare

## **Ares**

Ares was one of the few children of Zeus and Hera. Known for his quick temper and bloodlust, Ares is the god of bloody warfare and rebellion. Involved in almost every war story, his popularity was low across Greece.

Ares is not afraid to anger the other gods, even killing a son of Poseidon to protect his daughter. Ares is not afraid to spill blood for his enjoyment and thrives in the violent nature of war. Often getting higher sacrifices from the Greek people when in intense wars. Are we willing to trust him to make the right decision and not start another war for his benefit?

Associations: God of war (spirit of battle), slaughter, and protection

## **Artemis**

Artemis, the twin sister of Apollo, is known for her mysterious nature. Given the significant title of Mistress of Animals in Homeric Hymns. The goddess is heavily associated with the moon, and all things wild. With her brother, Apollo, they were credited with the creation

of archery. Born first out of the twins, some translations even said that Artemis assisted in the birth of her twin brother. Artemis is one of three great virgin goddesses along with Athena and Hestia. Having no children, she leads a group of huntresses who devote their everlasting virginity and will do anything for her honor.

Associations: Goddess of the hunt, wilderness, the moon, and archery

### **Apollo**

Countering his twin sister Artemis, Apollo is the god of the sun. Seen as a god that offers help and wards off evil, Apollo is a patron of several aspects of everyday life. Often seen with his signature lyre, he holds rule over many of the arts; working closely with the Muses. His sister, Artemis, and Apollo were credited with the creation of archery. His major connection to mortal life is the Oracle of Delphi, a great influence on several Greek Hero stories.

Associations: God of music, poetry, oracles, plague, and sun

### **Aphrodite**

Originally an early-age war goddess in Sparta, Aphrodite is not afraid to start some bloodshed. Along with being deemed the cause of the Trojan War, the love goddess has a major influence on the mortal world. Being one of the few gods almost everyone at the time worshiped, Aphrodite's story could be tracked through other ancient civilizations. Being the only goddess that was deemed 'unruly' and 'untamable', given her rejection to submission.

Associations: Goddess of love, beauty, and desire

### **Demeter**

One of the most well-known mother goddesses, Demeter is one of the most worshiped gods on Olympus. Being the oldest sister among the original "eaten" gods, Demeter is known to have a calmer, matronly expression than her younger sister Hera. Nonetheless, Demeter held the livelihood of the mortals in her grasp, which determined whether the gods got their sacrifices. Seen within the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, with the abduction of her daughter Persephone. Demeter starved the mortals and the gods lost their power with the lack of sacrifices. If Demeter isn't happy, she could end the Greek civilizations and the other gods.

Associations: Goddess of agriculture, grain, the Earth,

### **Hermes**

The second youngest god, only Dionysus being younger, Hermes started his life being a trickster god. Often seen in myths aiding heroes in their quests, such as Perseus and Odysseus.



Delivering the messages of gods, Hermes is seen with mortals more than the Olympians. He also works as the conductor of the dead to Hades, given that he is a dream god. Hermes is a highly worshiped god by travelers, opening his rule to several common aspects of mortal lives.

Associations: God of trade, eloquence, soul conductor, and messenger of the Gods

### **Dionysus**

Despite being described as youthful and beautiful, Dionysus' worship can be traced back to before Ancient Greece. Dionysus' worship played a significant role in ancient religion through festivals and cultural performances. Dionysus differed by being one of the only gods who had previously died; generally being changed with every different era.

Dionysus also has deep ties to ritual madness, resulting in cults favoring him. The premise of these cults is getting "religious ecstasy", being intoxicated which allowed Dionysus to control the mortal's body. Dionysus has followers of "outcasts", such as artists, women, and slaves.

Associations: God of wine, the grape harvest, theater, and religious ecstasy/ritual madness

## **Persian Pantheon**

### **Ahura Mazda**

Worshiped by Darius I, the great supreme god Ahura Mazda was deemed the greatest of all gods and creator of the universe. The highest spirit in Zoroastrianism, Ahura Mazda has a long list of titles and was seen as an immovable character. His name meaning "Lord of Wisdom", and his forces were representations of all good and order in the world. He also created the twin spirits of Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu. Spenta Mainyu is the overseer of light, truth, and light. His twin, Angra Mainyu, is the spirit of destruction, darkness, and death.

Associations: King of Gods, Creator of the Universe and all within it.

### **Angra Mainyu**

Born alongside his twin Spenta Mainyu, Angra Mainyu is the evil, destructive spirit to counter his brother's "Holy Spirit" status. Angra Mainyu's epithet "The Lie" expressed the intentions built within his powers. His influences of greed, wrath, and envy aid him in attacking the light in the world. With his horde of envy-embodied demons, Angra Mainyu is determined to see the fall of his father, Ahura Mazda. Without Spenta Mainyu, there's no one to counter Angra Mainyu's actions other than Ahura Mazda. Will Angra Mainyu aid the Greeks in the fall of the Persian Pantheon as a stepping stone to his father's demise?

Associations: Principle of Evil, Chaos, & Discord

### **Mithra**

Mithra was born with a torch and knife in hand, a child born from Earth herself. Growing into his godhood, Mithra soon was assigned the changing of the seasons, helped maintain cosmic order, and overall became Ahura Mazda's right-hand man. With his rising sun association, he is often paired with the Persian goddess Anahita, who oversaw the fertilizing waters. His mythos can be seen throughout other civilizations' stories, often a popular god that Roman soldiers worshiped. Through his cults, Mithra's influence spread from India as far as Spain.

Associations: God of the rising sun, covenants, contracts, and kingship

### **Hvar Ksata**

Hvar Ksata, also known as Hvar Khshaita, is one of the oldest gods in the pantheon. Countered by the moon goddess Mangha the early gods are seen as all-wise. Although Mithra may have taken over as the primary sun god, Hvar Ksata still oversees thriving life on Earth. Aiding in the flourishing of crops as Mithra is focused on the godly intentions of the sun god. Widely venerated, Hvar Ksata continues to be honored in the pantheon and offers divine grace in legitimizing kingship for mortals.

Associations: God of the full sun and divine grace

### **Ardvi Sura Anahita**

The most powerful goddess in the Persian pantheon, Anahita oversees life-giving properties. Soldiers would pray to her for their survival in battles, Anahita was most worshiped among the Persian goddesses. Identified as Ahura Mazda's daughter, her influence survived the times and can still be seen today through several religious changes. Working with the sun gods, Mithra & Hvar Ksata, Anahita sustains mortal lives.

Associations: Goddess of fertility, health, water, wisdom, war and women

### **Rashnu**

Seen as both a spirit and an angel, Rashnu is the deity of justice. With the assistance of Mithra and Sraosha (the god of religious obedience), he takes the deeds of souls and weighs them on his golden scales. This weighing is to determine the soul's future, the scales favor no one no matter status. He has the final decision on the fate of all souls. Saved souls are led by him on 'the bridge of separation' to the safety of heaven. Those deemed 'unjustified' are forced to cross

a razor-thin bridge and fall into hell. Rashnu takes no pity on any souls and only takes minor influence from Mithra and Sraosha. Will Darius I survive his foul weighing?

Associations: An angel; the righteous judge of the dead

### **Bahrām**

Bahram or Verethragna, the warrior god whose only responsibility is to fight against the demons of Angra Mainyu. Closely associated with the gods Rashnu and Mithra, Bahram also has a widespread cult associated with him.

Taking any form to protect the Persian people, he was deemed the protector of his people.

Bahram was greatly worshiped due to his hand in granting victory; as well as being the god that blessed mortals with healing powers and the patron god of travelers.

Associations: Warrior god who fights against evil and the spirit of victory

### **Haoma**

Named after the divine plant, Haoma, the spirit Haoma was prayed to for strong sons. Haoma was the first priest installed by Ahura Mazda, to focus on the survival of mortal men. The introduction of the drink Haoma was through the influence of Haoma to aid in the conception of sons. Pressing the juice of the Haoma plant was said to alter consciousness, giving individuals strength, virtuality, and visions. He also assisted Amesha Spenta in the guarding of all animal creations.

Associations: God of the harvest, health, strength, vitality; personification of the plant of the same name whose juices brought enlightenment

### **Tishtrya**

Tishtrya or Tiri is often depicted in two ways, a single spirit with two names or twin spirits that work together. For this committee, we are depicting him as a single spirit with two names. In many myths, Tishtrya is depicted as a white horse battling with the drought demon Apaosa.

Associated with the star Sirius, Tishtrya brings rainfall to Earth to keep the mortals and agriculture alive.

Associations: God of Agriculture & Rainfall

### **Atar**

The great son of Ahura Mazda, Atar is the spirit personification of fire. Fire is considered the symbol of divinity, fire was used across Zoroastrian practices. Similar to other Persian gods, Atar's cult had a significant role in mythology. Atar symbolized purity and truth, allowing for

defense against evil influences. Atar grants blessings protects the righteous, and dispenses justice upon the wicked. Atar's human form is often depicted holding a stalk of the haoma plant, linking him and the spirit Haoma.

Associations: God of the divine element of fire; personification of fire

### **Vayu**

The realm between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu was the domain of Vayu-Vatu. This depicted Vayu as neither a good spirit nor a bad spirit. His worship depended on which way the wind blew. Being a free-will spirit allows Vayu to determine how he is seen. If treated poorly by the Yazatas, Vayu would turn the winds in favor of Angra Mainyu and the daevas. Without the support of Vayu, the mortal backing may fall short.

Associations: God of the wind who chases away evil spirits

### **Zorvan**

Zurvan, the god of infinite time and space, is considered the primordial creator deity before the birth of his son Ahura Mazda. Stepping down from the chief Persian deity, Zorvan gave the throne to Ahura Mazda. Zorvan appears under two aspects; limitless time and time of long dominion. Also deemed an impartial god, he does not side with either side of the battling Persian gods. Depictions of Zorvan can vary, leading to complexities surrounding his worship.

Associations: God of time, personification of infinite time

## **VI. Helpful Resources**

### **Greek Resources:**

<https://www.britannica.com/list/12-greek-gods-and-goddesses>

<https://www.theoi.com/greek-mythology/greek-gods.html>

<https://greekgodsandgoddesses.net/gods/>

Videos:

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDb22n1VXGgeoPb-HBWwzEoAwDvckSrC&si=IOuDtp1maX\\_1nAC2](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDb22n1VXGgeoPb-HBWwzEoAwDvckSrC&si=IOuDtp1maX_1nAC2)

### **Persian Resources:**

<https://www.iranicaonline.org/>

<https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1486/twelve-gods-of-persian-mythology/>

<https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1488/ancient-persian-gods-heroes-and-creatures---the-co/>

<https://www.timelessmyths.com/mythology/ancient-persian-gods/>

Videos:

<https://youtu.be/V4niY5Uq95k?si=dQ8Je4Lv7gHRsyIM>

<https://youtu.be/mI0rmCcGdoc>

**General:**

<https://oldworldgods.com/>